

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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inside

- ★ Interview with George Monbiot pages 6-7
- ★ Argentina from Revolt to revolution? page 6
- ★ Eamonn McCann on Bloody Sunday page 3

Ireland's richest 100 people have €13.231 billion!



■ **MICHAEL SMURFIT** got €17 million last year. Michael Smurfit's gross pay works out at over €225,000 a week. That is enough to pay the average industrial wage for 432 workers.



■ **Anti-union airline boss MICHAEL O'LEARY** added nearly €127m to his fortune in 2001. O'Leary is chief executive of Ryanair, and has a 12 percent stake worth €116million.

THESE MEN AREN'T WORRIED ABOUT RECESSION



■ **DENIS O'BRIEN** was "paid" €308 million in 2001. He moved to Portugal two years ago, which has allowed him to avoid €50 million in Irish tax.



■ **TONY O'REILLY** media baron grabbed €17.8million last year. He is worth at least 1632 million. "I am a maximalist," he told one interviewer "I want more of everything."

No change over debt

TWO YEARS ago the leaders of the G7 richest countries promised to cancel \$100 billion of debt owed by 52 of the poorest countries. Today only \$18 billion of debt has been cancelled. "A cruel joke" is the Jubilee Debt Campaign's verdict.

Random tossers like sheep

ACCORDING TO the respected *Nature* magazine new research suggests that stockbrokers may act like sheep.

One explanation offered is that the behaviour of stockbrokers is "truly random" or as *Nature* put it "like tossing a coin" but now researchers believe "instead of acting alone, brokers followed herd instinct, just as sheep move en masse across a hillside, or as migrating wildebeest pour across the plains of Africa."

US ally executes gays

BUSH AND Blair have not condemned three killings carried out by the government of one of their key allies in the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia, run as a dictatorship by the Saud family, publicly beheaded three men in December for the crime of being gay.

The charges against the men included "ugly acts of homosexuality". The men were the latest of at least 122 people who were executed in Saudi Arabia last year.

"WHEN a poor person steals just in order to eat or, better, when many poor people steal in order to feed their children, it is called looting, assaults, left wingers, subversives, organisation. Immediately afterwards there is repression.

When ruling classes, the multinationals and the industrialists steal

Church cover-up continues

THE Catholic Church, which proclaims itself the protector of family values and children has shown how false that commitment is.

The Church promised to set up accountable structures to ensure abuse of children could never happen again.

Apologists for the

Church claimed things had changed for good.

In fact little, if anything has changed. In a secret letter the Pope instructed bishops to set up secret tribunals to investigate paedophile priests without involving the civil authorities.

Most papal letters are released with press conferences and PR spokesmen. This letter was sent secretly and published in Latin.

Attached was a letter requesting that details of the document be kept from the

public.

It is thought to be the work of Cardinal Ratzinger, the right-wing conservative in charge of matters of morality in Rome. Ratzinger is also a close friend of Desmond Connell, Archbishop of Dublin.

When bigots accuse the pro-choice movement of being child-killers, ask them how the Church is going to save children from the abusers in its own ranks who will be given the protection of church secrecy.

Racism grounds Bush's man

ONE OF George Bush's bodyguards has become a victim of the racist security guidelines.

These were introduced by the US President in the wake of the 11 September attacks.

The bodyguard, of Arab descent, was banned from boarding a flight in Washington on Christmas Day because American Airlines security thought that he could be a terrorist. "This is a case of discrimination.

Our client believes he was denied the right to fly because he is of Arab descent," said his lawyer.

"I'm as mad as heck," said George Bush. Never has Bush said a truer word.

WICKLOW WASTE SCANDAL

Where there's muck there's corruption

ILLEGAL dumping in Wicklow has thrown some light onto what privatised waste management really means.

It turns out the council themselves have been using illegal dumps. The dumps are on land owned by CRH the company at the heart of the Ansbacher scam.

Wicklow County Council overseer for the area John Mullins committed suicide the day after the illegal dumping operation at the Roadstone quarry was disclosed.

Postpone

Asked was it illegal to deposit waste at the quarry, a council spokesman said: "I suppose it probably is."

The council used the death of Mullins, to postpone an examination of the Roadstone site to establish the extent of the illegal dumping operation on the lands.

The Whitestown dump, which is near Mullins's home, contained some 300,000 tonnes of illegal waste on lands belonging to a local farmer.

It is believed that the illegal dumping operation could have netted in excess of £30 million for those involved based on the commercial cost of dumping, currently running at £100

per tonne. Waste disposal firms charge £45,000 to collect an articulated truck full of hospital waste.

The nearby Coolamadra dump at Donard contained an estimated 10,000 tonnes of waste. Tests carried out by the Environmental Health Officer in Wicklow showed that samples taken from the site were contaminated with blood.

The site is close to a tributary of the Slaney river from which water supplies for Carlow and Wexford are drawn.

Roadstone claimed there was no evidence of an illegal dump on its lands which include the controversial Glen Ding area which was obtained by the company at a rock bottom price in the early 1990s.

■ Cement Roadstone Holdings is Ireland's largest industrial company.

CRH bought the Glen Ding woods in Wicklow in 1992 for £1.25 million.

The land was sold by the government without tenders being sought while Charles Haughey was Taoiseach at a bargain basement price.

CRH also bought lands at Kinsealy, Co Dublin,



from Haughey, in the early seventies. The company also gave £18,000 in consultancy fees to GEO Engineering, a firm run by Haughey's offspring.

The former chairman of CRH, Des Traynor, acted as a bagman to Charles Haughey and operated the Ansbacher accounts from 42 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin.

The same building is the headquarters of CRH.

Prior to the sale CRH gave £18,000 in consultancy fees to GEO Engineering, a firm run by Haughey's offspring.

Meanwhile a leading Fine Gael supporter in Wicklow is under further investigation in connection with waste dumping in the county.

Andrew Phibbs was convicted for dumping thousands of tonnes of waste at Hempstown in west Wicklow. He was recommended by Wicklow County Council and is under scrutiny in relation to

dumping at another location south of Blessington.

Up to 300,000 tonnes of hospital waste and toxic materials were dumped at Whitestown over the past five years, despite written complaints from local people to Wicklow Co Council and other state agencies.

Observed

The estimated cost of removing the waste is €38 million.

Local residents, Russell and Emer Bailey, first raised a warning about the dumping operation at Whitestown in January 1998.

The couple, who observed the dumping of sacks of refuse through the day and night at the quarry, which is close to their home, alerted the council, the Department of the Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency, without success.

They also spoke directly to the office of then county manager Blaise Treacy, whose officials acknowledged the complaint by letter.

When the council decided to privatise the county's waste collection service, Phibbs was among those recommended to householders as a legitimate operator.

Monsanto's deadly drugs

A SHOCKING new study in Vietnam has shown that the chemical warfare waged by the US is still blighting people's lives over 25 years later.

Scientists found that residents living in Binh-Hoa have over 200 times the normal levels of dioxin in their blood.

The deadly dioxin is one of the constituents of Agent Orange, used as a

defoliant by US forces in the Vietnam War.

Agent Orange is still causing cancers and birth deformities across Vietnam.

The chemical was made by the Monsanto multinational, which pushes genetically modified foods today.

Monsanto's murky past has also been exposed by a report in the *Washington Post*.

It says Monsanto pumped out now banned chemicals called PCBs into rivers in Anniston in Alabama for decades despite knowing they were poisonous.

Fianna Fail still backing Lawlor

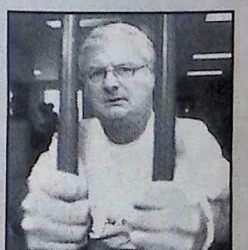
LIAM LAWLOR's friend's made sure the Mr Big of corruption didn't suffer to much in his latest escapade with the courts.

The judges allowed him to take a week's holiday in New York before serving a week's sentence for contempt. Lawlor's son described the it as a "business trip".

When he came back to Dublin he was able to bypass customs and immigration because his friend Dermot O'Leary, who sits on the Aer Rianta board made special arrangements for him.

Dermot O'Leary visited the controversial TD when he served his first week-long sentence in Mountjoy.

O'Leary is a Fianna Fail national executive member. In addition, Mr O'Leary is also an occasional fundraiser for



Fianna Fail. O'Leary was accompanied by the FF architect Ambrose Kelly when he visited Lawlor last year.

what we think

BUSH'S WAR AGAINST THE WORLD GOES ON US threatens new targets

PEOPLE IN Somalia, one of the poorest countries in the world of fear that they are to become the latest targets in the US "war on terror". The US, and key allies Britain and France, have increased surveillance flights to four or five a day over Somalia.

There are due to be three Marine Corps units of 1,200 troops each in the Arabian Sea near Somalia by mid-January.

The increased threat comes after a warning by United Nations agencies that 500,000 people in Somalia face severe food shortages.

Claimed

After an international appeal for food only a quarter of the 20,000 tonnes needed was received.

But the US views such people in need as "terrorists". US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld claimed there were Al Qaida bases in the country: "We know there have been training camps there, and they go inactive when people get attentive to them."

"We are working to ensure that Somalia does not become a haven for terrorists," said State Department

spokesperson Richard Boucher.

The US closed down Barakat, a major Somali bank, last year, claiming it sponsored terrorists. Many Somalis relied upon Barakat to receive money from relatives overseas. The closure has driven more people into poverty and desperation.

And Somalia is just one of the targets that the US may hit in the wake of its war against Afghanistan.

The US is still threatening to attack Iraq despite having destroyed the country once already with sanctions.

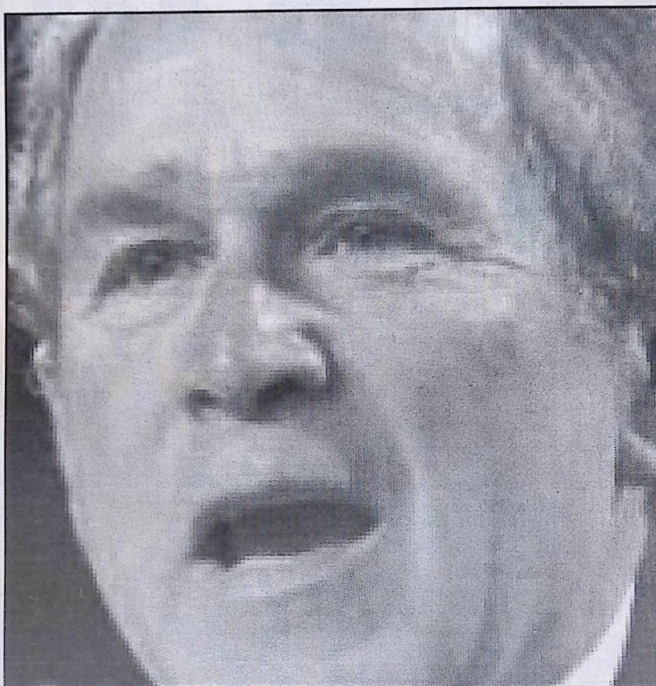
Afghanistan is hardly a model of peace and stability brought about by US bombing. US bombs continue to kill civilians in Afghanistan. The *Guardian* investigated the US bombing of the village of Nizai Qalaye on 29 December.

The US claims that only Taliban and Al Qaida fighters were killed there. But the *Guardian* found that over 100 civilians were killed.

Reporter Rory Carroll described "bloodied children's shoes and skirts, bloodied schoolbooks, the scalp of a woman with braided grey hair, wedding decorations".

He went on, "Precision guided bombs vaporised occupied buildings and a second wave an hour later hit people digging in the rubble and, judging from hair and flesh on the edge of three 40-foot holes some distance from the complex, those trying to flee."

The US war has bolstered the power of brutal local warlords. The major Afghan city of Jalalabad is "a city in the hands of thugs and crooks", according to C.J. Chivers of the *International Herald Tribune*: "Now the Taliban are gone the city is run once again by warlords and guerrillas."



"Corruption runs unchecked through what counts as the local government, a group of ill tempered guer-

rilla brigades.

"They welcome outsiders with threats and extortion, and steal food from aid convoys."

The need to keep mobilising against the system and its wars has never been

clearer.

The US has attacked the Somali people before in the early 1990s. That took place under the banner of the UN and involved US, Belgian, Canadian and Pakistani forces.

Ordinary people welcomed their arrival. So did rival warlords, who had been built up by the US and Russia during the Cold War. Yet within months UN forces alienated all sections of the population. Their only answer to the grinding poverty and the complex political divisions was a combination of repression and siding with one armed group against another.

So General Aidid went from being the West's best hope for producing a stable government to being public enemy number one.

The Somalis had good cause to hate the US. When its troops arrived in 1992 they were welcomed as liberators. Within months they were regarded as a murderous enemy. In July 1993 US helicopters blasted a meeting of Somali elders. At least 16 armour-piercing missiles slammed into the room, butchering around 70 of the most respected men and women in the community.

Somalis were treated as a brutal horde who responded only to force. UN troops opened fire on a mass demonstration of Somali civilians, killing over 500 people.

Horried

The UN left in 1994 with the country still in ruins and the warlords strengthened.

The US were horrified that a bunch of people they regarded as second class and barbaric had, through great courage and self sacrifice, humiliated the most terrifying military machine in the world.

It was not just a few "extremists" who fought back. Now Bush wants revenge.

The US force did nothing to halt famine in Somalia and simply added a further twist to the country's spiral of violence.

The real reason for the intervention was to demonstrate US power, to control strategic territory and to make the world safe for big business.

Just like everywhere else America has militarily intervened.

Resistance in the neo liberal dream

Foreign Policy magazine has named Ireland as the world's most globalised economy, much to the delight of economists here.

The neo-liberal agenda is being pushed through with a vengeance. We have one of the most right-wing governments in Europe and one which has no ideological

hang-ups about unfettered capitalism.

Hardly a week goes by where privatisation and the floating of public companies is not mentioned.

Embraced

Refuse collection, water, and private investment in transport is the order of the day.

Tragically the unions have

given the neo-liberal agenda a leg-up. They have embraced the market with all the zeal of recent converts, and some like SIPTU's Des Geraghty have seen fit to attack public sector workers as inefficient.

Social partnership deals have brought them quicker into the neo-liberal net than other European trade union leaders who have sometimes had to respond to the opposition on the ground.

Across the country there

are people fighting service charges and incinerators, others are horrified at third world debt and poverty.

Further, they know it is the neo-liberal agenda that lies behind the attempts to privatise local transport and the bin charges, the desperate state of the health service, the scape-goating of refugees, and the threats to the environment.

Workers are voting on the neo-liberal agenda with their feet. No amount of expensive

television ads can convince people in Dublin to pay the ridiculous bin tax.

Care workers in IMPACT are taking strike action against the run down of the health service.

These campaigns, alongside building anti-capitalist movement are the best way to call a halt to the neo-liberalism. And to stop us having to foot the bill so the bosses can stay at the top of their league table in the coming recession.

Socialist Worker Appeal

Help us raise €20,000!

I want to support the Socialist Worker Appeal and help keep *Socialist Worker* at the centre of the struggle for a better world. Please find enclosed the following donation: €

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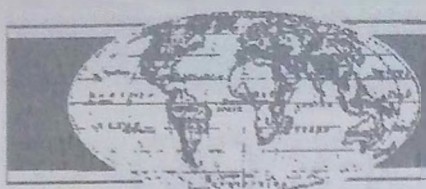
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news of the world

Colombia

The US's other war set to escalate

AS Socialist Worker went to press, Colombian troops and tanks are poised to sweep into rebel enclaves, after President Andres Pastrana tore up the latest peace proposals between the government and rebels.

The attacks are the latest stage in the US "Plan Colombia".

Plan Colombia is a \$7.3 billion package backed by the US and Colombian governments. The US is the biggest single contributor, with \$1.3 billion, almost all in military aid. The plan claims to be a "war on drugs".

It involves military attacks on the powerful FARC guerrillas who control a huge area of Colombia.

It will also involve spraying chemicals, supposedly to destroy coca.

The biggest drugs traffickers in Colombia are government officials, the military, right wing paramilitaries and the US.

Laurie Hiatt, wife of the

US military attaché in charge of the Colombian anti-drugs operation, was arrested last year for smuggling cocaine to the US.

Multinational corporations have taken over land in Colombia. This has been accompanied by right wing paramilitaries killing peasants.

This has led peasants to support the guerrillas. It has also meant the only way many can make a living is by growing coca.

Free trade policies backed by the US and big business have also ruined peasants' ability to make a living from other crops.

Instead Colombia now receives more US arms than any country in the world apart from Israel and Egypt.

The US is spraying the Roundup herbicide in Colombia.

This chemical is produced by the multinational Monsanto, which also produced the deadly Agent Orange herbicide that the US used in Vietnam.

The US also plans to spray a fungus, Fusarium Oxysporum, which can mutate and infect a wide range of plants.

The IMF oversees the Colombian government's policies, which include opening the country to multinationals and whole-



Colombian Troops

sale privatisation of public services. Half the gross domestic product goes on paying debt.

In the cities workers have fought back against these policies with a wave of courageous and militant strikes.

They too have been tar-

geted by the paramilitaries, with hundreds of activists assassinated.

The US is terrified that if the government is defeated in Colombia it could destabilise the whole region which it sees as of vital strategic and business interest.

Over 1,500 trade union

activists were murdered in the 1990s, and at least 55 have been murdered last year.

The Colombian government, the US and multinational corporations are intent on smashing all opposition to their interests, and are seeking to enforce their right to plunder and profit.

FARC a response to attacks

THE FARC is a long-standing peasant-based guerrilla movement which has been fighting in Colombia's civil war since the 1960s.

That civil war emerged from a bloody period in the 1940s known as "the violence". It saw rival sections of Colombia's ruling class unleash private armies and slaughter hundreds of thousands of ordinary Colombians.

That violence ended when the rulers made a deal which, while maintaining the trappings of democracy, ensured that all real power stayed in the hands of parties they set up and controlled.

The result was that Colombia became one of the most unequal societies in the world, with just 3 percent of people owning 70 percent of all land.

The FARC was founded by the Communist Party in the 1960s as a self defence force for peasants in rural areas.

Inspired

There have since been other guerrilla groups—the most important of which is the ELN, set up by students inspired by the 1959 Cuban revolution.

The FARC and ELN today have over 20,000 fighters between them and control large areas of the country.

Both have repeatedly tried to end the civil war and

agree peace deals, to allow people to seek change through elections and other peaceful means.

Every time Colombia's rulers have used the most bloody repression to block the possibility of peaceful change.

In the 1980s the FARC launched the UP political party to stand in elections. Thousands of its members and candidates were simply gunned down by death squads.

The last few years have seen more peace talks between the FARC and the government.

Eventually the government ceded effective control of a Switzerland-sized area in the south to the FARC. The US backed Colombian government is now preparing to escalate its war in these areas.

Bring them home

Niall Connolly, Martin McCauley and James Monaghan have been held in Colombia since August 11, 2001.

The Colombian military have accused them of training members of the FARC guerrilla movement and travelling on false passports.

They have found it difficult to consult with their legal representatives and to prepare a proper defence.

Martin McCauley's wife Cristin was able to visit the prisoners and speak with her husband in a Bogota detention centre last year.

"He was very pale and his eyes were glazed and a bad colour", she said. "23 hour lock-up and solitary confinement was sure to have an effect on the physical appearance."

They were moved to Dijin police holding centre in Bogota then to the high security La Picota Prison because of the cramped

conditions in Dijin.

Supporters of the men claim their detention at the Dijin facility was illegal under Colombian law because it is only designed for interrogations.

Within a few days they were returned to Dijin because a gun was found on the same wing at La Picota.

The authorities thought that the gun might be used against them.

The Bring Them Home campaign is calling on supporters to write to Ahern and Cowen to demand action as well as the Government of President Andres Pastrana Arango, Palacio De Narino, Santafe De Bogota D.C., Colombia. Or e-mail: rdh@presidencia.gov.co - and call for the men's immediate return to their families.

Bring Them Home, The Colombia Three, P.O. Box 8605, Dublin, Ireland. e-mail: colombia3@eircom.net Bank of Ireland Account: 36665039, 2 College Green, Dublin 2. sort Code: 90-00-17

Workers occupy to fight repression and privatisation

SOME 800 workers in Colombia are in occupation against privatisation.

The workers in the city of Cali are fighting the threat to private the Emcali public utilities corporation.

Armed paramilitaries and police have repeatedly threatened the occupation.

These are not idle threats in Colombia.

Thousands of activists have been assassinated by paramilitaries in the country's long-running civil war.

Several leaders of the Sintraemcali union have been killed, and the union's current leader, Alexander Lopez, has survived repeated assassination attempts.

"We are calling on solidarity from the international community to help us gain victory for a working class that resists misery and oppression," writes Alexander from the Cali occupation.

● Messages of support to colombia_sc@hotmail.com

in brief

● India

STRIKES brought India's banking system to a halt this month. Around 600,000 bank workers, some 70 percent of the workforce, struck after Standard Chartered Bank decided to relocate 30 administrative staff.

Lalit Ngada, secretary of the Indian bank workers' union, reported that the strike was a total success: "Clerical workers were not turning up for work in most of the key banks across the country." There are fears that other banks may try to force workers to move thousands of miles. "The bank is saving money at the cost of the employees by

resorting to unfair labour practices," said Tarakeswar Chakraborty, an official of the All India Bank Employees Association.

● Serbia

MORE THAN 1,000 workers occupied banks in Belgrade in Serbia. They were protesting against the closure of four big banks.

It is estimated that some 8,500 people could lose their jobs if the banks shut. Unemployment is around 50 percent. A trade union representative, Gordana Djukelic, said: "We will stay here until they reverse their decision to shut down the banks." The government has decided to force the four banks to close.

Eamonn McCann

De Brun and the health sell-offs

Sinn Fein leaders in the North have been taking some stick over their complicity in the privatisation of public services by the Stormont Executive.

While the party in the South talks a good fight in defence of the public sector, SF Ministers are in the vanguard of the privatisation drive in the North.

All mainstream parties say one thing in opposition and do another in office.

What makes the contradiction in this case so glaring is that SF is in opposition and in office on the same small island at the same time. The abandonment of position is simultaneous rather than sequential.

The discomfort of some at this situation has come through in a number of statements complaining about the policies being put into practice. Gerry O'Hara, a former Northern chairman of Sinn Fein and a long-standing member of Derry City Council, said at the beginning of January that it was time to challenge the British Government's "back-door plans" to privatise public services.

British-inspired "creeping privatisation" was now setting the Executive agenda, he said. The North was being "forced down the privatisation road".

"Key players in the Executive", were failing to challenge this trend, with the result that: "We may well have to live with the long-term effects of ill-thought-out privatisation".

There was little in the statement that any socialist would object to. Moreover, it was timely, issued in a week when headlines in the North were dominated by doctors' warnings that the hospital system was in "meltdown" and there was vigorous debate raging about the funding of the NHS.

But, of course, Cllr. O'Hara's colleague, Health Minister de Brun, is, on any reckoning, one of the "key players in the Executive" leading the public service "down the privatisation road".

Projects

Under rules brought in by the Major Government in 1993, public money for major health projects isn't released until NHS managers have explored the use of private finance instead.

Eight years on, the delays and shortages which have resulted have backed up through the system until the corridors are clogged with sick people on trolleys.

Obviously, de Brun didn't create this crisis. Equally obviously, she has accepted, and operates, the system which has brought it about. The furthest she has gone in distancing herself from the set-up she took over is to decry the lack of investment during the Thatcher-Major years and the refusal or inability of the Department of Finance to allocate more money to her department now. But then, her party backed the Programme for Government which included this allocation.

The fact that as prominent a party member as Gerry O'Hara should publicly criticise the neo-liberal policies being implemented by colleagues—even if he wasn't explicit about who he was aiming at—reveals a degree of discontent within Sinn Fein about the party's policy direction on the public service.

However, broad discontent and implicit criticism of individuals isn't going to change anything much. Members of Sinn Fein who seriously think of themselves as socialists should be arguing for a different strategy—getting out of the Executive and mobilising around hospitals, schools and the rest of the public sector against cut-backs, pay-offs and the use of private finance.

As to the chances of this happening—it would be rather more likely if such a campaign already existed, even in preliminary form. If the health unions were putting up stiff resistance to the withholding of public funds and the introduction of private finance, there'd be a pole of attraction for many, and not just in Sinn Fein, who are up for a fight on the issue but don't see anything happening to give them confidence they'd win if they joined in.

Criticism of Sinn Fein's acceptance of privatisation is fine. But if it's not accompanied by an effort to galvanise union and community resistance it only amounts to a polemic against a particular party, which is no basis for building a serious campaign.

Sectarian murder in Belfast

Close down the post till threats withdrawn

THE SECTARIAN murder of Catholic postal worker, 20-year old Danny McCollgan, has sent a shiver of fear through workers of all religions and none across Northern Ireland, but especially in North Belfast.

This fear escalated when the Red Hand defenders, a cover name for the UDA and LVF, admitted that it had killed the young worker and announced that all Catholic postal workers were now 'legitimate targets' as well as all Catholic teachers.

Worker

As one postal worker from a Protestant background told *Socialist Worker*, "We're all 'legitimate targets' now—I mean how are they to know who's a Catholic and who's a Protestant. When they killed young Gavin Brett last year, it was because they thought he was a Catholic."

Within hours of the murder, workers at the Mallusk sorting office walked out in protest at the shooting of one of their colleagues. The Communication Workers Union (CWU) called for no collections the next day and no deliveries of post on the Monday following the killing as a mark of respect for their murdered colleague.

Niall who works in Mallusk says "we have been warning Royal Mail for over a year now that a postal worker will be killed in North Belfast."

"There have been a number of attacks on postal workers on the Hightown Road, near where Gavin Brett was shot dead, over the last 18 months."

"Postal workers coming back into the sorting office after a delivery have no choice but to go through that area."

Threats

Postal workers are concerned that management's response to threats by loyalist murder squads is to do the UDA's ethnic cleansing for them by simply moving those who are being threatened to other areas.

This is what happened last year in the Lishum/Dunmurray/Seymour Hill area last year after a threat

to Catholic postal workers.

Royal Mail management's caving in to the gunmen did not, of course, work.

In the end, the threats were withdrawn only after postal workers responded by stopping all deliveries to the area as long as the threat remained.

Pressure from people waiting on benefit giro and from businessmen waiting on cheques quickly changed the UDA's mind.

Response

All the postal workers we spoke to say that the CWU needs to respond to

the murder of Danny McCollgan and to the latest lot of threats in a similar manner—no deliveries of mail until all the threats are withdrawn.

"This is exactly the kind of solidarity action that has seen threats against DHSS and hospital workers withdrawn", says Niall. "It's the

kind of action we in Royal Mail need to take now.

"Otherwise, we will go to work each day scared that it will be our last."

"We can't live like this. We have to isolate the sectarian bigots and let the UDA know that they won't be allowed to get away with this."

Action can make an impact



Trying to get to school: A legitimate target for loyalism?

IN NORTH Belfast violence has erupted once more. Education has become the focal point for sectarian attacks.

One woman who lives in the Ardoyne one of the most effected areas from the violence, said, "Most people up this way are fed up, they hear all this talk about 'peace and prosperity' on the news and in the papers, but all they see is petrol bombs and poverty on the ground."

"They don't see what the Good Friday agreement has actually done for them, and I would agree with them."

The level of intimidation has forced a number of schools to close early, including the Holy Cross primary school. There are now a number of schools that were once in mixed areas but are now in areas controlled by the UDA.

At the Our Lady of Mercy school, less than half a mile from holy cross, the school was attacked by half a dozen men during classes.

One brandished a weapon while the others went round smashing car windows. In the last few years the school has been attacked several times, attacks have

included elaborate hoax bombs, designed to scare pupils and teachers alike.

A resident said, "Schools in north Belfast are looking more like prisons or fortresses, it must kill the children to walk into a school that has to have shutters on it to stop petrol bombs from destroying it. How can people do this to children?"

There are four Catholic schools which are most affected by the current upsurge in sectarian violence. They are:

- Holy Cross Girls Primary
- Our Lady of Mercy Convent Primary
- Our Lady of Mercy Girls Secondary
- St. Gabriel's Boys Secondary

Socialist Worker spoke to a number of teachers in these schools.

ANN: "Things have been very bad lately you don't know what is going to happen next. We had an attack on the school recently—the children were hysterical."

"Afterwards I just felt so angry that this should be allowed to happen to a school."

"And make no mistake, it is being allowed to happen. The abuse our

children have to put up with."

"I think part of the problem is that people feel so scared and powerless to do anything to stop it."

"That's why I think the unions are so important, if they call action it will give people a chance to express their opposition to what's going on without feeling that they are leaving themselves open."

BRIAN: "Up to now the policy by the schools and the unions has been to say and do nothing and hope the problem would go away. That hasn't worked. The attacks just keep getting worse."

"Our school has suffered continual attacks over this last couple of years, hoax bombs left at the gate, constants threats by phone, school buses stoned almost on a daily basis."

"The children are forbidden from walking to or from school. Now they can't even go out to the schoolyard."

"Pupils spend the whole school day inside the building because the yard is considered too dangerous."

"Several children and teachers have been assaulted at the school gate getting on to school buses."

"It is time to try a new approach, that's why the unions need to get involved."

FRANCES: "I think that any action called by the teaching unions should not be just be by the Catholic schools. It should also involve the state schools, particularly Boys Model and Girls Model and Wheatfield Primary which are all close by Protestant schools."

"That's why The NAS-UWT and the Ulster Teachers Union needs to join the INTO in calling for industrial action."

"Actually there are other groups of workers that are affected, not just those who work in schools and postal workers. The Everton Centre on the Crumlin Road looks after people with disabilities, has had to close a couple of times because of the trouble, so NIPSA also needs to get involved."

"I think we should all support each other at times like this."

"I think after the murder of Daniel McCollgan postal workers need the support of teachers. If we all do this—support each other—somewhere down the line we might start making an impact. One thing is certain, doing nothing doesn't work at all."

ISSUES FOR ANTI CAPITALISTS

ATTAC or retreat?

Socialist Worker has argued since the growth of the anti capitalist movement that important issues of politics intervene in the development of any movement.

Initially there is a sense of euphoria as new ideas and new people move into opposition to the system.

But there are inevitably moments when difficult questions have to be faced—such as whether to reform or overthrow capitalism or is the state something we can take over, walk around or does it have to be smashed?

So while the aftermath of September 11th and the ensuing war did not end the anti-capitalist movement as some media commentators would of liked, there was some confusion.

Non-militant

For instance, ATTAC in France has been to the fore of the anti-capitalist movement worldwide. Anyone in Genoa or Brussels couldn't have missed them. Its aims are to "recapture the spaces of democracy lost to the financial sphere". "Militant action" to "encourage governments" to protect their own people from multinationals is encouraged. Which makes it a pity that they have become decidedly non-militant in the pursuit of their central aim, the Tobin Tax.

At one level the Tobin Tax is simple and brilliant. \$1.5 Trillion (\$1,500,000,000,000) of financial market deals are done daily. 95 percent of these are currency speculation or interest rate "swaps", "spots", "futures" and "forwards". These create nothing—they only transfer wealth from one place to another. The idea of taxing this money, even at a small level, is to "throw sand in the wheels" of the financial system, making the profit margins of speculators obsolete.

ATTAC believes that if loopholes—such as off-shore banks—could be closed, the tax could easily stump up the \$225 billion a year the UN believes could eliminate the scourge of global poverty.

The issue is how to go about getting the reform. ATTAC has concentrated on getting the French Assembly to pass a resolution in favour of the Tobin Tax.

ATTAC is less and less at the fore of protests and direct action. Being pulled into the sphere of the Jospin government—which is rightly hated by workers—has blunted the edge.

Should the main effort of anti-capitalist campaigners be to convince politicians that the world's bankers they represent should have their activities curtailed? Or is it to oppose the state that backs up the system with force of arms, be it the police on the street or the bombs in Afghanistan?

And it is the attitude to the war that has brought these issues to a

head. Susan George the vice president of ATTAC and one of its leading spokespersons has written extensively on Third World Debt. She has been a campaigner against the ravages of the system.

But she has been lukewarm on the war. She talks about "fascist fundamentalism" being dealt with by "weeding out ... dangerous fundamentalist elements" (repression) and by the West offering economic carrots (blackmail) to those who do.

She writes: "We now face a shadowy, undeclared, non-territorial enemy who is not fighting for traditional goals, who respects none of the 'rules of war' evolved over past centuries and who brings the full horror of unpredictability into the homes and work places of the wealthy, the democratic, the law-abiding."

"We must at all costs avoid the 'clash of civilisations' à la Samuel Huntington. This is this scenario Bin Laden and his fellow fascist fundamentalists most devoutly desire, believing as they do that indiscriminate American action against Arab civilians will radicalise millions of Moslems and lead to full-scale holy war against the hated West.

"Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has described Bin Laden as 'a megalomaniac who wants to take power over the world'. We must hand him no opportunities."

"Weeding out" is a euphemism for repression. Mubarak, for instance, is a past master at this. In the 1980s and early 1990s he used military force to seal off poor areas of Cairo, going from door to door, dragging out suspected Islamists, executing scores and confining thousands of others to concentration camps.

Adopting

Perhaps she simply is telling the French Government what she thinks it would like to hear? Or perhaps she is indeed "confused". Either way, ATTAC are in danger of moving into the political mainstream in order to achieve their short term aims.

And along the way, Susan George by adopting the language of Bush's "war against terrorism" is in danger of doing severe damage to the movement.

The vibrant French anti-capitalist movement and the militant labour movement have failed to build a substantial anti war movement.

Part of this is a history of failing to understand the nature of Islamism, and long history of being quiet on anti-Arab racism with its origins in French imperialism.

Bush's war has shown how the state exists to defend the interests of those that run the system for profit.

Those within the movement who close their eyes to this and who end up appearing to provide excuses for their wars (on whatever grounds) blunt the axe of the anti-capitalists.

GEORGE MONBIOT IN

'It's time to s own agenda

George Monbiot has written extensively on privatisation in Britain, notably in his best selling book *Captive State: the Corporate Takeover of Britain*.

He writes a regular column for the *Guardian* newspaper and according to the *London Evening Standard* is one of the twenty-five most influential people in Britain. He spoke to *Socialist Worker*, before travelling to Dublin to take part in a Globalise Resistance forum.



What has been the effect of privatisation in Britain in the last number of years, particularly the experience of PFI and PPPs?

THE PRIVATE finance initiative was described by Sir Alastair Morton, a member of the British government's Private Finance Panel and one of the scheme's architects, as "the Heineken of privatisation—taking the private sector to the parts of the government machine not reached by previous privatisations". (Heineken used to be

media over here, and the government has made full use of that.

The private finance initiative has been sold to the public as a means of bringing private money into public services. But my research has shown that it is destined instead to drain vast amounts of public money into private companies. I looked, for example, at the hospital building project in Coventry, in central England.

The original, publicly financed, plan had been to refurbish the two existing hospitals there, at a cost of £30 million.

This was then turned into a privately-financed plan to demolish them both and build a new one, smaller than the two existing hospitals, at a cost of £174 million.

This would cost the National Health Service £36 million a year for 25 years, plus a one-off grant of £25 million, plus the land on which the city centre hospital now stands, which is worth many millions.

All this would be given to the private companies, which would knock down the two hospitals and build a new one out of town, which is much less accessible to the people of Coventry.

So why had this happened? Well I was as mystified as anyone else, until a brown paper envelope arrived on my doormat, containing a confidential report commissioned by the NHS, and written by two economists and a professor of accountancy.

The report showed that the project had been "progressively tailored to fit the needs of private investors".

The government had told the NHS that there was no point in applying for public funds for hospital building or repair schemes: all future projects would have to be privately financed.

So the NHS knew that there was no point in presenting private companies with a deal which they wouldn't be interested in financing. The £30 million refurbishment scheme had to be dropped because it was too cheap, and replaced by one which was more expensive, and therefore offered much greater profitability for the private consortium.

[The IMF] has two principal aims: to secure terms of trade which favour the rich world and to set conditions which enforce privatisation and a friendly climate for foreign corporations.

realise this is going to destroy the entire basis of state provision in this country? That it will make the privatisation of the railways look like a success? But there is a profound bias against complex analysis in the

The only way the NHS could afford this, the report showed, was to cut back on the number of both beds and doctors and nurses.

Coventry would lose 25 per cent of its all-purpose beds and 20 per cent of its staff.

This pattern is being repeated throughout the NHS: the government's own consultants have shown that for every £200 million spent through the private finance initiative, we will lose 1000 doctors and nurses.

Now the initiative is being used to fund the provision of schools, prisons, roads, the London Underground, magistrates' courts, army barracks, in fact just about aspect of state activity, with similarly disastrous results.

"The idea that the IMF and the Bank arbitrate even-handedly to help the world's poor is a sick joke."

Very soon after the Blair government came to power, it quietly introduced a measure which guarantees that if there is a conflict between public need and the needs of the companies involved in the private finance initiative, the companies come first.

The only way of meeting this obligation is cutting back massively on public services. The private finance initiative will bring universal public provision to an end in Britain.

This is, in other words, a scam of monumental proportions.

From the companies' point of view, it's a far better deal than conventional privatisation, as their income stream is guaranteed throughout the 25, 30 or 60 years of the project's life.

From the public's point of view, it's hard to conceive of a scheme which would offer worse value for money.

Perhaps you could say something about the international context to this?

PFI AND privatisation have become one of Britain's leading export industries. In some respects, they can be understood in this light. The government has pumped an entirely

new industry, merchant bank vice and cotton company

We in Britain their guinea pigs.

They have tried a different model of privatisation, found lucrative, built up reserves and their of scale, then, wit of some very business lobby g pressure and from the UK begun to press onto other countries

In some cases matter of crude co in Ghana

British improving supply h made c upon water tion; in c been a

obfuscation, fiddl and straightforwa both government panies persuade fo ernments that the offers value for m

As a result, cou Finland to South Canada are now a model.

The UK is the market leader, so its companies are mopping up lucrative contracts all over the world.

Please tell the people of Ireland they must fight this scheme by all legitimate means possible if they don't want to follow us to a fully future, in which the left to fend for them:

How do you t the current or Argentina fits this picture?

ONE OF the es of the do model of ec globalisation create the san ditions for mu al companies the world.

If regulations same everywhere, are no barriers to biggest companies

RESISTANCE

Ireland's socialist magazine

- STOP THE WAR ● Eamonn McCann
- Abortion referendum
- How can we end sectarianism?

NOT INTERVIEWED ...

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How do you think
the current crisis in
Argentina fits in to
this picture?

ONE OF the purposes
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tion companies.

We in Britain have been
their guinea pigs.

They have tried out several
different models of pri-
vatization, found the most
lucrative, built up their cash
reserves and their economies
of scale, then, with the help
of some very aggressive
business lobby groups and
pressure and persuasion
from the UK government,
began to press the model
onto other countries.

In some cases it's been a
matter of crude coercion, as
in Ghana, where

British aid for
improving the water
supply has been made
conditional upon water privatisation:

in others it's
been a matter of
obfuscation, fiddled figures
and straightforward lies, as
both government and com-
panies persuade foreign gov-
ernments that the approach
offers value for money.

As a result, countries from
Finland to South Africa to
Canada are now adopting the
model.

The UK is the
market leader, so
its companies are
mopping up lucra-
tive contracts all
over the world.

People tell the
people of Ireland
they must fight this
scheme by all
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low or to a fully privatised
future, in which the poor are
left to fend for themselves.

precisely the same products
and services under the same
conditions in every country
on earth.

This allows them to achieve
undreamt-of economies of



STRIKING AGAINST global capitalism. Workers in South Korea this month.

It's time, I think, to form a new international, which stops responding to an agenda set by the Bushes and the Blairs, and starts obliging them to respond to its own agenda.

What effect has Bush and Blair's war had on the movement against globalisation?

IN THE United States it has been disastrous, as liberals and radicals have fallen silent.

In many parts there's something of a lynch mob atmosphere, in which anyone who questions US foreign and defence policy is regarded as a potential sympathiser with terrorism.

I don't blame people, in those circumstances, for keeping their heads down.

Elsewhere, the effect has been less marked.

In Britain, the movement fused temporarily with the peace movement, which brought out vast numbers of people: more than any anti-war mobilisation since Vietnam.

Now that the media's attention has moved away from Afghanistan, and Bush has been caught up to his neck in the Enron scandal, I think we'll quickly regain the momentum we lost as a result of the sup-

pression of American dissent.

Where do you think the anti-globalisation movement (for want of a better phrase) is heading? I would rather call it the internationalist movement, as much of what we're fighting for is a better global settlement.

It's not globalisation itself most of us are contesting, but global domination by corporations and by the leaders of the G8 nations.

I can think of plenty of very positive forms of globalisation: such as a better distribution of wealth between nations, democratic global decision making, action on climate change and disarmament.

Let's stop allowing those who oppose us to define us, as anti-this or anti-that.

I think our future lies in formulating and trying to introduce positive alternatives to the existing world order.

There are plenty of good ideas floating around.

It's time, I think, to form a new international, which stops responding to an agenda set by the Bushes and the Blairs, and starts obliging them to respond to its own agenda.

WHAT DO SOCIALISTS SAY

Going down the coalition road

THE EASIEST way to tell when a party is thinking of going into coalition is when some of their members start saying it might be a bad idea. Hence Ruairi Quinn's "get the bastards out" speech and Pat Rabbitte trying to remember what a principle looks like.

And the Green Party has been saying "We wouldn't go into coalition unless..." (which isn't the quite the same as "We wouldn't go into coalition.")

So Sinn Féin reacted angrily to suggestions by John O'Donohue and Bertie Ahern that Fianna Fáil would rule out coalition with Sinn Féin after the general election later this year.

Sinn Féin councillor Martin Ferris cited the Sinn Féin members in the Northern Ireland Assembly and on Cross-Border bodies who regularly work with Fianna Fáil.

At their Ard Fheis last summer Sinn Féin refused to rule out entering coalition—instead postponing any decision until a special delegates conference after the next general election.

Although a large body of the party's rank and file opposed coalition, Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, Sinn Féin's only sitting TD, won the day.

Sinn Féin has grown seriously over the last period as disillusionment with official politics has set in.

While most media attention has focused on whether Sinn Féin is "fit to be in coalition" with the big parties, the real question is virtually ignored.

Sinn Féin presents itself as an anti-establishment party, committed to fighting for the underdog. Its base of support in the South is strongest in the poorer working class areas.

Over the past twenty years Sinn Féin activists have built this base through involvement in community issues and local campaigns.

So what would be the effect on its members and

At their Ard Fheis last summer Sinn Féin refused to rule out entering coalition - instead postponing any decision until a special delegates conference after the next general election.

Although a large body of the party's rank and file opposed coalition, Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, Sinn Féin's only sitting TD, won the day.

supporters of it joining Fianna Fáil in government?

And what does its willingness to consider such an option tell us about the party?

The record of the Irish Labour Party record is instructive.

Ten years ago Labour emerged from decades as a minor party with the largest vote since the 1920s. Then too people were sick of the establishment parties. Labour's rhetoric was anti-establishment.

When the then Labour leader Dick Spring denounced the "Golden Circle" and the corruption of Fianna Fáil, many thought he meant it.

But Labour used the big gains made at the election to keep Fianna Fáil's Albert Reynolds in office. Two years later Dick Spring switched to backing Fine Gael and put Bruton into power.

The current leader of the Labour Party, Ruairi Quinn, was finance minister. His budget was hailed as a "bourgeois budget" by the *Sunday Business Post* because of his generosity to big business.

The price of getting their feet under the table was to turn on and betray those who had voted them in.

As a result Labour's vote collapsed and its reputation among working class people went through

the floor.

Despite the radical values and concerns of Sinn Féin's voting base and even many of its rank and file members, SF is first and foremost a republican party that sees the British presence and partition as the cause of Ireland's woes.

Left wing or anti establishment sentiments are therefore not essential, but serve to deliver a popular base to the republican project. They can therefore be switched on and off.

The party is already in Coalition in Stormont. The crises at Stormont have all been over the "Peace Process", and communalist concerns. Important as these issues are, Sinn Féin ministers of Education and Health have provoked no constitution crises over privatisation, health or even the 11 plus exam.

The reality is that these ministers have no essential disagreement with their Unionist Party colleagues over these questions which affect the lives of working class Catholics and Protestants.

Of course others have been down this road before. After the formation of Fianna Fáil in 1926 De Valera was fond of quoting James Connolly and radicalism characterised the party's appeal. He even proposed to abolish the banks!

Once in from the cold Fianna Fáil were not slow to prove they were effective champions of the needs of the Irish capitalists and have remained so ever since.

This means that there is rude awakening waiting for supporters of Sinn Féin who believe it will be a vehicle for real social change. It is probable that this crunch will not be faced in 2002 for SF supporters.

It is more likely to be the following election that puts SF in a strong position to negotiate a coalition deal. And the party will have by then increased the confidence of the big parties that it has embraced "respectability".

And assuming it finds its way into coalition with Fianna Fáil in 2007, there is no reason to believe the result will be any less disastrous than it was for Labour.

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Uprising in Argentina:

Can rebellion lead to revolution?

THE UPRISING in Argentina shows that revolution is still possible in the modern world. It has shown mass action from below can topple governments and inflict a defeat on big business policies.

Vast numbers of ordinary people, many of whom had never imagined they could change society, took to the streets and showed they have the power to confront the capitalist system.

The uprising has proved wrong all those who say people are too apathetic to fight or that they have been bought off by material possessions.

Argentina is not a Third World peasant state. It is the most highly industrialised country in Latin America. The majority of people live their lives much like people in Ireland — with cars, videos, fridges and similar material possessions.

The uprising also proves wrong those who claim that our rulers' control of the mass media means the vast majority of people are duped into accepting the system.

People's experience under capitalism can contradict the ideas pumped out by the media, bosses and governments, and force people to take action.

The newspapers and TV in Argentina certainly did not tell people to oust presidents or bring down governments.

Speedy uprising

THIS IS not the first time in recent years that mass action from below has ousted hated rulers and governments. Less than two years ago an uprising overthrew Slobodan Milosevic's regime in Serbia.

A million people took to the streets, and faced down armed police. Demonstrators attacked the parliament and media buildings. Milosevic's 12 year old regime fell apart in days.

In Ecuador two years ago a mass revolt by peasants and workers against IMF-backed free market policies forced out the president, Jamil Mahaud.

In Indonesia in May 1998 a wave of revolutionary struggle overthrew General Suharto.

Anger against 32 years of repression and economic attacks on the poor exploded as students and then workers rose up in revolt and within weeks had toppled one of the world's most vicious dictatorships.

And in Albania in 1997 a mass revolt by workers and the poor against the chaos of free market policies brought down the government of Sali Barisha.

These recent revolts show how even the most repressive and seemingly powerful regimes can crumble in the face of mass



Tens of thousands took to the streets in Argentina defying brutal repression (above)

protest.

Such revolts are often unexpected and unfurl with astonishing speed. Suddenly a revolutionary overthrow of society seems not just a pipedream or an abstract concept, but a real possibility.

In defiance of the old ideas, the mass of ordinary people who come together to challenge society can be transformed.

People discover they are capable of things they had hardly dreamt of, and realise talents and potentials previously crushed by the grind of capitalism.

And from collective action and organisation the most oppressed and exploited people in society—women, black people, ethnic minorities—often emerge as leaders in the revolutionary movements that spring up.

Sparkling revolution

THE RUSSIAN socialist Lenin argued that there were two main factors needed for a revolutionary situation to develop.

First, the working class and the oppressed can no longer go on living in the old way.

Secondly, Lenin argued, the ruling class also needed to be in crisis. "It is not enough for the

exploited and oppressed masses to realise the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes. It is only when the 'lower classes' do not want to live in the old way and the 'upper classes' cannot carry on in the old way that the revolution can triumph."

'Millions came to realise how intolerable their economic and social existence was'

The combination of these factors creates a huge social crisis, as a battle develops for the future of society.

There is no single or predictable spark for a revolutionary crisis.

It can come from government crisis, the impact of our rulers' wars, or the effect of slumps or economic turmoil.

A revolution is not a single one-off event. It is a process of struggle, with ebbs and flows, advances and retreats.

The struggle can seem to come as if from nowhere and take everyone by surprise.

No one, for example, expected to see such a swift downfall of General Suharto in Indonesia or of Milosevic in Serbia.

These revolutions came from the crisis and instability of the capitalist system, but also stemmed from the previous day to day struggles, both victories and defeats, from below.

The revolutionary socialist Rosa Luxemburg described this process brilliantly in her account of the struggles that shook Russia in 1905:

"This first general and direct action awoke feeling and consciousness in millions upon millions as if by electric shock.

"And this awaking of class feeling expressed itself forthwith in the circumstances that the working class mass, counted by millions, quite suddenly and sharply came to realise how intolerable was that social and economic existence which they had patiently endured for decades in the chains of capitalism."

Crucial choice

IN ALL revolutionary struggles the ruling class will try and get away with merely conceding reforms, the bet-



immediate recall and accountability of delegates, and are rooted in working class struggle.

They have been able to help ensure that the mass of people can deal with the problems thrown up by the revolution itself.

And they have proved in embryo how production and the rest of society can be organised in a new society, based on meeting people's real needs rather than the pursuit of profit.

The best example, as we argue elsewhere on this page, comes from the successful Russian Revolution in October 1917.

But similar workers' organisations arose in many other revolutions throughout the 20th century. For example, in the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 workers and revolutionary councils were set up in towns and villages, in factories and offices, in government ministries and on farms in the countryside.

In the capital, Budapest, workers formed a central workers' council which coordinated production in the factories, the distribution of food and medicines, the organisation of transport and the publication of newspapers.

These kind of workers' organisations have often existed alongside the existing state machinery when revolutions have erupted.

There has existed a period of "dual power", during which the weakened institutions of the state vie for control with the new workers' organisations. But this state of affairs cannot last indefinitely.

The crisis in society has to be resolved one way or another—either in favour of the revolution or for the restoration of the old ruling class.

The ruling class will try to use its existing control of the state machinery—such as the loyal sections of the army or police—to regroup its forces and try to crush the revolution.

Tragically this is what happened time after time—from Germany in 1919 to Chile in 1973, as the ruling class slaughtered thousands of workers and restored their order.

That is why to ensure a lasting transformation of society it is necessary to break up the old state machine.

That means ousting not only the figureheads of the old regime, but all sections of the old ruling class—the factory bosses and managers, judges, army generals and police chiefs.

And it means workers taking hold of the economic basis of society, and directing the whole productive process towards meeting the needs of everyone.

in my view Enrongate

WHILE George Bush declared war on the world, a rumbling scandal has broken which sheds light on the people who back the toxic Texan.

Enron, the massive Texan energy company, has the dubious distinction of becoming the biggest bankruptcy ever. And it wasn't caused by any external factor, just good old-fashioned fraud and creative accounting.

Last year *Socialist Worker* reported on the company's behaviour in India, where it was involved in some disgraceful dealings with the local government of Maharashtra, who refused to pay its inflated gas prices and maintenance charges on a huge power plant. Enron had hired the police to attack demonstrators, often paying their salaries. Enron admitted, in a hearing in Washington, to bribing the Indian Government.

Enron had been lauded by other captains of industry for its enterprise and foresight in becoming the world's biggest energy trader. *Fortune* magazine voted it "most innovative company in America" four years running. This "innovation" presumably refers to the \$580m dollar profit it falsely claimed to have made, and the \$500m debt it concealed between 1997 and 2001. There was a concerted, systematic covering up in the corporation's accounts over a period of years.

Retired Enron boss, Jeffrey Skilling, was once quoted as saying, "You must cut jobs ruthlessly by 50 or 60 percent, depopulate, get rid of people!"

He had the foresight, to cash his \$62 million stock options and quit in August, claiming personal reasons. Lucky guy, because soon after the roof fell in.

In the course of an audit, the financial fiddling was exposed and the share price plummeted by 99 percent. This decimated the workers' bonuses and pension plans because they were tied to the stock price.

Enron was Bush's biggest single election backer, showing the kind of company he likes to keep. The scandal is causing embarrassment, because of the astonishing scale of the fraud. Enron has always had access to the highest levels of government, and used this position ruthlessly.

Policy

Enron officials helped write Bush's energy policy, which included the ripping up the Kyoto protocol. Enron successfully lobbied Bush for deregulation of Texas's electricity markets in 1999.

When Bush was governor of Texas, his close relationship with Enron boss Kenneth Lay (who Bush calls "Kenny-Boy"), became the subject of controversy after Enron plants were exempted from a new state law requiring the installation of pollution-control technology.

Enron officials have met Vice-President Dick Cheney to "discuss energy policy" on at least six occasions since Bush stole the presidency. A criminal investigation has been launched because Lay telephoned two senior Bush administration officials and gave them advance warning before the company went bust in November.

The telephone calls to the White House raise questions about whether the officials to receive them, Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill and Commerce Secretary Don Evans, handled this information correctly.

Did they for example, ring warning their cronies who held stock? Did they move to protect the employees' pensions and bonuses? Which of those two is more likely?

US Attorney General John Ashcroft announced that he was distancing himself from the criminal investigation by his own department — he received \$25,000 from Enron during his election campaign.

Enron, the seventh-biggest US corporation before its bankruptcy, faces separate investigations by the US Labor Department and the Securities and Exchange Commission and by a number of congressional committees.

Typically, the workers get it in the neck while the creditors line up to get their pieces of silver. The likes of Skilling keep their fortunes and no one considers asking the White House for any of the millions they paid Bush in the election back.

Why did Arthur Anderson, Enron's accountants allow shell companies to be formed illegally round Enron and inaccurate accounting to continue for years and destroy the evidence?

The story is one of pure capitalism. Politicians bought, laws changed, environmental agreements torn up, blind accountants, wealthy bosses and their pals, fraud and 20,000 workers made redundant with no pensions. Bush the warmonger is a crook.

by HUGH O'CONNER

TV

Remembering Bloody Sunday

By EAMONN
McCANN

BLOODY Sunday still brings out the worst in some people.

The two new TV dramas produced to mark the 30th anniversary have been denounced by a variety of commentators, some of whom haven't felt it necessary to see the films before delivering their judgment. Rather in the way they initially approached Bloody Sunday itself.

The main line of attack is that the films are one-sided, depicting the paras as murderers and the dead and wounded as innocent victims.

What's more, it's said, there's an imbalance between, on the one hand, the media fuss made about Bloody Sunday and the relative lack of interest in other Northern atrocities, in some of which just as many people died, just as cruelly.

But what drew the writers of the films — Jimmy McGovern's Channel 4 production "Sunday" and Paul Greengrass's "Bloody Sunday", made for ITV—to the subject were precisely the things which made Bloody Sunday different.

When the paras killed 13 people in the Bogside because they'd stood up and demanded equality, many in the community, and in other Catholic working-class communities across the North, particularly young people, saw themselves facing a choice between giving up the fight for equal rights, or getting armed and fighting back.

Depict

Both films accurately depict the mushroom growth of the IRA beginning before the stench of cordite had cleared from Rossville Street. The killings hadn't come about by unfortunate accident or misunderstanding, nor because psyched-up soldiers ran amok.

The British Army's Commander of Land Forces in the North, Robert Ford, had laid out his intentions in a memo dictated three weeks before the slaughter, on January 7th, "I am coming to the conclusion...that we must shoot selected ring-leaders of the Bogside young hoodlums".

Ford's preferred strategy, and his role on the ground urging the paras to "Go on...go and get them", is, again, portrayed accurately in both films.

Far from pre-judging the truth, these sequences are meticulously



The paras move in on Bloody Sunday

lously constructed around established fact.

Similarly, the films' depiction of soldiers planting four nail bombs on the dead or dying Gerry Donaghy, 17, is not "bloody fantasy", as the Daily Mail claimed, but the only conclusion possible from a mass of evidence, including from two doctors who had examined the stricken youth, that there were no nail bombs in his pockets when the car in which he was being driven frantically to hospital was stopped by soldiers at a roadblock.

The depiction of Barney McGuigan inching out from cover waving a white handkerchief towards Paddy Doherty bleeding his last in the shadow of the Rossville Flats and crying, "I don't want to die on my own", and a para from across the street shooting him in the back of the skull, is exactly as scores watched it happen.

Jim Wray, 22, unemployed, is shown shot in the back at point-blank range as he lay wounded in Glenfada Park, just the way neighbours watching horrified from their windows remember.

And Jackie Duddy, 17, a brilliant amateur boxer, laughing at the sight of Fr. Daly out-running him away from the soldiers when the fatal shot hit him in the back, Hugh Gilmore, 17, dying cradled in the lap of Geraldine Richmond, a factory worker, moaning "I want my mammy", and so on and on.

All the deaths shown in each film have been reconstructed from a mass of eye-witness evidence.

Bloody Sunday didn't happen on a lonely road or a back alley in the dead of night, but in bright winter sunshine, seen from

One of the reasons the issue has remained raw for 30 years is not that the truth is elusive but that it is obvious. Hostility to the films doesn't arise from concern for accuracy about the facts but from unreadiness to acknowledge the facts.

the flats and houses all around or from behind walls and bits of street furniture when marchers had crouched to take cover.

One of the reasons the issue has remained raw for 30 years is not that the truth is elusive but that it is obvious.

Accuracy

Hostility to the films doesn't arise from concern for accuracy about the facts but from unreadiness to acknowledge the facts.

Both films depict the killings face-on and at close range. Nobody dies prettily.

The films look at the common facts from different angles. Greengrass's film for ITV tells the story mainly through the eyes of SDLP MP Ivan Cooper.

One problem with this device is that it requires that Cooper be shown at the heart of the action throughout, and making every key decision on the civil rights side.

He is depicted making his way to the march through reverential crowds, or explaining to abject supplicants asking about television licences that, today, civil rights must take priority. Bernadette Devlin, beyond argument the

most popular and influential person involved on the civil rights side on the day, is depicted as an irrelevant fool.

Greengrass also includes a scene in which a priest delivers a patronising lecture to Gerry Donaghy, which a docile Donaghy accepts in respectful silence.

As a depiction of the relationship between Catholic priests and young Bogside men in 1972, this is laughable. Greengrass belittles the role of the Bogside people, and particularly Bogside women, in their own liberation.

The problem is political. Greengrass accepts the cock-up theory of Bloody Sunday.

The massacre didn't flow from deliberate strategy but from a combination of belligerent stupidity on the part of officers like Ford and confusion and then inappropriate aggression from the grunts on the ground.

Thus, his account of the day—the Greengrass film is framed within the 24 hours of January 30th—includes a reconstruction of communications between British Army command headquarters and Ford and Para Commander Derek Wilford at the edge of the Bogside.

This is taken directly from the transcripts of the radio traffic. Focusing on the fog-of-battle circumstances of the moment when the paras went in facilitates the cock-up theory.

But the more important point is why the paras were there as the front-line force in the first place, brought from Belfast on Bloody Sunday morning.

This is the point McGovern homes in on, showing the alarm of the Derry garrison commander on discovering the paras' deployment, and

including a scene of the paras, as they make ready, boisterously echoing the attitude of Ford's January 7th memo.

He shows the moment the garrison commander is told that the deployment decision had been made "at the very top", and indicates his assumption (which he has recorded) that this meant it was a cabinet decision.

Assumption

McGovern puts Tory Prime Minister Edward Heath on the screen giving Lord Chief Justice Widgery instruction on the conclusion he wants from the first inquiry: "Remember we are fighting not just a military war but a propaganda war".

McGovern, that is, shows the source of the evil which burst on the Bogside located in the conscious intentions of the political, military and legal elite, whereas Greengrass suggests a general moral deficiency in the political and security apparatus.

The Greengrass film concludes that what's needed is strong leadership from decent politicians like Ivan Cooper.

McGovern suggests that the answer lies somewhere in the already-existing decency and sheer inimitability of the people themselves.

Discussion of the differences between the films shouldn't obscure what's entirely positive about both, that they present Bloody Sunday as the chilling murder spree which it was, carried out on behalf of a Tory Government by a regiment which is extolled by the New Labour Government of today for its role in Afghanistan. See both of them.



**where
we
stand**

Workers create all the wealth in capitalist society. A new society can only be constructed when they collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution.

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system.

The courts army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to run society in a neutral fashion.

To destroy capitalism, workers need to smash the state and create a workers' state based on workers' councils.

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST

The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class.

We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry.

We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army. Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class.

Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states.

We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Trade unions exist to defend workers' interests. But the union leaders' role is to negotiate with capitalism—not to end it. We support the leaders when they fight but oppose them when they betray workers. We stand for independent rank and file action.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. The SWP aims to build such a party here.

Fight the attack on the left in the ATGWU

MICK O'REILLY, ATGWU Regional Secretary, is suspended from office and gagged while Bill Morris's head office conducts a trial into allegations of 'mismanagement'.

So far Morris has refused to allow a transcript of the proceedings to be seen by ATGWU members or elected officers. O'Reilly is challenging this.

Crude

The trial is in reality a crude attempt to remove a union leader who has supported the ILDA train drivers and stood out against the partnership agenda of the ICTU and the majority of trade union leaders here.

Morris put in Jimmy Elsbey to run the union

in Ireland. At a recent union conference in Dundalk Elsbey called on employers to now understand that the ATGWU was not the enemy and wanted to embrace partnership.

Embrace

As Jimmy Kelly told *Socialist Worker*, "This is a fight for the soul of the ATGWU. Rank and file members of the union need to be made aware of what is at stake."

This is not just about Mick O'Reilly, but whether the ATGWU will continue to stand out against the pro-partnership stance of the ICTU and majority of trade union leaders."

Mick O'Reilly needs to defy the gag on making public statements imposed by Morris and co. He needs to appeal



Mick O'Reilly

to the rank and file of the union to take a position against this unfair trial.

Elected delegates should call an Irish Regional Conference to put an end to this farce and if necessary take the running of the Irish region into their own hands.

*VOTE KELLY AND CAIRNS

The ballot for the General Executive Council is being run. There are three candi-

dates for the two positions for the Irish Region.

Members have two votes. In a sinister move, head office sent out a number of ballot papers to branches stating—quite wrongly—that members could only vote for one candidate.

Two candidates—Jimmy Kelly and Norman Cairns—have stood out against the victimisation of Mick O'Reilly and should be supported.

SWP activist meetings — all welcome

ATHLONE: Contact 01-872 2682 for details

BELFAST CENTRAL: Meets Tuesday at 8.30pm in Kitchen Bar, 16 Victoria Square, near Cornmarket

BELFAST SOUTH: Meets Wednesday at 7.00pm in Queens Students Union

BELFAST WEST: Contact 07771 for details

BELFAST QUEENS UNIVERSITY: Wednesdays 4pm, Peter Froggatt Centre

BRAY: Meets Wednesday at 8.00pm ring 087 for details

CLONAKILTY: Phone (01) 8722682 for details

CORK: Meets Mondays at 8.00pm in Telecom Elcom Club, MacCurtain St

DERRY: Wednesdays at 8pm in Foyle Friend Centre, 32 Great James St

DROGHEDA: Meets Wednesdays 8.00pm Contact Kevin at 041- for details

DUNDALK: Meets Thursdays 7.30pm phone 087 for details

DUN LAOGHAIRE: Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the Christian Institute

DUBLIN BALLYFERMOT: Meets Thursdays contact 087-

DUBLIN BLANCHARDSTOWN: Contact 087-

DUBLIN CABRA: Meets Thursday at 8.30pm in Aughrim St Parish Hall, 13 Prussia St

DUBLIN CENTRAL: Meets Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways Pub, Parnell St

DUBLIN DUNDRUM: Meets

DUBLIN FINGLAS/BALLYMUN: Meets Wednesday

Phone Kevin on 086-

for details

DUBLIN RATHMINES: Meets

Thursday at 8.30pm downstairs J O'Connell's (Pub) 5th, Richmond Street Dublin 2.

DUBLIN RIALTO: Meets Wednesday at 8.30pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR

DUBLIN SOUTH CITY: Meets at 8.30pm Tuesday upstairs Bowes (pub) Fleet Street Dublin 2

DUBLIN TALLAGHT: Meets Wednesday at 8pm in Jobstown Community Centre

DUBLIN DCU: Meets 2.00pm thurs in CGO2

DUBLIN TCD: Meets 1.00pm wed 087-

DUBLIN UCD: Meets 1pm Wednesdays phone 087-

ENNISKILLEN: Phone 01-872 2682 for details

GALWAY: Meets every Wednesday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square (beside Cuba) 8.30pm

GALWAY UCG: 7.00pm Meets Wednesday Contact 086-

LIMERICK: Contact 01-872 2682 for details

LEIXLIP/MAYNOOTH: Contact 086-

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY: Meets Thursday 1.00pm Contact 087-

SLIGO: Contact 087-

Meets Thursdays ATGWU Hall,

ISSUES FOR THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Do we need a new union?

THE full-time leadership of the trade union movement is appalling. Not only have they failed to take the lead in any serious fight against low pay, but they have tied their members to years of 'partnership' with the bosses and the government.

As a result many trade union activists are very frustrated and angry.

An indication of this is the thousands of SIPTU members who have applied to join other unions, including many at Dublin airport.

One trade union leader who has stood against the trend is Mick O'Reilly, Irish regional secretary of the ATGWU. He has opposed partnership, publishing an excellent pamphlet on the subject.

While ICTU and SIPTU were backing the Nice Treaty last year, O'Reilly came out against. And under his leadership the ATGWU gave a home to the ILDA train drivers and backed their demand for recognition and their strike.

Last year the axe fell. He, and colleague Eugene McLone, were suspended from their posts by Bill Morris and an internal trial was set up into 'mis-

management' of the union.

That trial is drawing to an end and it is expected to sack O'Reilly and McLone.

Everybody knows this is just a smokescreen behind which to isolate O'Reilly and his supporters and to decisively weaken the Left in the union.

This has led a number of trade union activists to be sympathetic to the call for the creation of a new, anti partnership union, with truly democratic structures, led by people of integrity.

While it obviously depends on the concrete situation, there are problems with this approach.

The danger is that a minority of the most militant members leave a union and set up their own union, but leave the majority of more passive members behind led by the old sell-out leaders—only now without the opposition of the activists that have left.

Isolated

The prospects of a united fight-back are diminished if the trade union movement divides between right-wing led unions and parallel minority unions of militants because these militants will find them-

selves more isolated.

There are circumstances in which these problems could be minimised and a movement of this sort could undermine the power of the right wing in the trade unions.

However, in today's circumstances, with a relatively low level of struggle with few strikes and a looming recession—with the threat of large-scale sackings and bosses taking the offensive—it is likely that most workers will stay with the devil they know.

Bureaucracy

The problems are not peculiar to one union but are general throughout the movement—and the problem with the trade unions is the bureaucracy. A conservative layer of full-time officials, often appointed for life, directs the affairs of the unions.

They enjoy a managerial salary, union car and are entirely divorced from the conditions of the rank and file union members.

For them defending the assets of the union and maintaining their negotiating relationship with the bosses and government are more important than the fight for wages and conditions for those on the shop-floor.

A dispute, and even worse a strike, disrupts

this routine and threatens to sour their friendly relationship with the bosses.

That is one reason why they are so keen on partnership and moderation, and are so reluctant to get seriously behind any of their members fighting back.

Of course they only enjoy this privileged lifestyle for as long as they control their members. They must therefore occasionally throw shapes and make fiery speeches, but manoeuvre is their method.

So it is not a question of a few rotten individuals but of the nature of trade unionism under capitalism.

Most of the time only a minority of workers are involved in struggle and the majority of the members are relatively passive.

This makes trade unions operate on routines and encourages bureaucracy.

Simply changing these leaders from above doesn't address this problem.

The key to change has to involve organising the rank and file to make fighting trade unionism a feature of every workplace.

The issue is not which union a particular group of workers belong to but how well they are organ-

ised. Well-organised work places and networks of shop-stewards can become a launch-pad from which to fight for rank and file control of the unions.

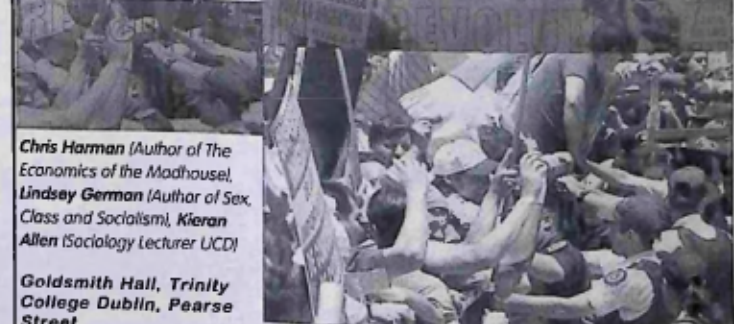
This means activists linking up, organising solidarity, running in union elections to challenge the right wing and producing rank and file papers and leaflets to breathe life back into the ground floor of the trade union movement.

It is relatively easy for the right to sack a good trade union official.

It is infinitely more difficult to neutralise a well-organised rank and file.

Two days of meetings and forums on the politics of revolution

Students & REVOLUTION



Chris Harman (Author of *The Economics of the Madhouse*), Lindsey German (Author of *Sex, Class and Socialism*), Kieran Allen (Sociology Lecturer UCD)

Goldsmith Hall, Trinity College Dublin, Pearse Street

Friday Feb 22nd & Saturday Feb 23rd
Seattle...Genoa...Mexico...South Korea... Argentina...

GLOBALISE RESISTANCE

Campaign launched to defend the right to protest

A CAMPAIGN has been launched for the defence of those arrested in recent police clamp downs on legitimate protest.

It is taking up the cases of anti-capitalist activists arrested on a recent anti privatisation protest, anti-war marches and a Critical Mass demonstration.

Fifty people attended a Globalise Resistance meeting on the attacks on civil liberties in Dublin on January 8th.

Law professor Ivana Bacik explained how the European Union is increasing and centralising police and security services but there has been no move to ensure human rights across Europe.

Rights

Kieran Allen from the SWP explained how the September 11 attacks are being used by the ruling class in America and elsewhere to strengthen their ranks against the global movement of protest.

In the discussion a number of speakers pointed out how the police was trying to intimidate the anti-war movement and to tie it down in court cases, so neglecting the war.

The Irish Anti War Movement has refused to be sidetracked and has kept its

attention focused on building the largest possible movement.

As one participant said, "It is time to show the police and the unelected judges that we will not take these attacks on our liberties lying down."

Kevin from Globalise Resistance pointed out, "The police clampdown affects far more people than just the protest movements."

"Everybody is now at risk, trade unionists, environmentalists, community groups—anyone who tries to stand up for themselves can be thrown in jail."

An American man who was involved in the Vietnam War protests had a timely reminder for everyone.

"If you think this is bad,

you would be amazed how far these guys will go. If we don't stand up to them now, they'll walk over us for the next ten years."

Part of standing up to the intimidation will be making sure there supporters outside the court for the trials:

■ Kieran Allen, anti war protestor, Monday January 21st, 2pm the Bridewell (Behind the Four Courts)

■ Burlington 14, Thursday February 21st, 10:30am, Old Richmond Hospital, North Richmond Street

■ Donal Mac Fhearraigh, anti war protestor, 10:30am Wednesday June 12, Court 50, The Bridewell (Behind the Four Courts).

Contact the Defence Campaign on 0876838746

Probation officers

Ballot for strike action

SOME 220 probation officers, members of the IMPACT trade union are balloting for strike action as *Socialist Worker* goes to press.

The dispute is over long-standing frustration at the Government's failure to implement improvements in the probation and welfare service.

One probation offi-

cer told *Socialist Worker*, "The Government just keep saying they don't have enough money."

Arguing

"For instance the Department of Justice are arguing that they can not afford additional officers, who would cost an extra €2.5 million, despite the fact that this was recommend-

IMPACT

Care workers set to strike to demand equality

SOME 700 professional care workers in the intellectual disability sector were set to strike in a pay dispute.

They are fighting against being excluded from the pay increase that has been granted to their counterparts in the statutory care sector.

The workers

"houseparents" and assistant "houseparents" are members of IMPACT working in homes for people with intellectual disabilities.

Management

At talks between the union and the employers — Health Service Employers' Agency (HSEA) — management dug in their heels.

The HSEA recently concluded a deal with carers in children's homes but refuses to implement it for these workers whose work is identical.

Activists

Union activists report that the two groups share common qualifications, pay and grading structures.

The carers in the sector are now paid between up to €172 per week less than staff performing identi-

cal work in children's homes.

The HSEA insists the childcare deal be strictly limited to that sector.

It also insists that if carers in the intellectually disabled sector are to receive any deal it must be through the discredited benchmarking process.

The strike is set to begin on January 21st and will affect homes in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Waterford, Wicklow and Athboy.

The homes under strike notice now include:

■ All Hospitaller Order of St John of God services in Dublin

■ St Michael's House
■ All Daughters of Charity services in Dublin

■ Brothers of Charity Services in Galway

■ Galway County Association for Mentally Handicapped Children

■ Brothers of Charity Services in Cork, Waterford and the south east

■ County Wicklow Association for the Mentally Handicapped

■ Daughters of Charity, Lisnagry, Co Limerick

■ Moyregan House autistic residential unit, Athboy

■ St Raphael's Hospital, Youghal.



A lively protest by Taxi drivers, bus drivers and members of the public blocked the main road between Ardra and Glenties with their vehicles in protest at the state of the road. The protesters say the N56 is in a deplorable condition and is a danger to users. The protesters are demanding National Roads Authority invest in the road.

Health and safety

€2000 for a life

STEEL erector Vincent Cummins was attempting to direct a beam into place high above the ground on the skeleton of the new power station outside Edenderry, Co Offaly when he lost his balance.

The safety harness he was wearing was his only lifeline, but the device that was meant to save him snapped, and Vincent Cummins plunged to the ground to his death.

The court found the harness supplied by Joseph Murphy Structural Engineering (JMSE) was "inherently defective" and should have been examined once a year.

JMSE was fined €1,000 on each of two charges relating to breaches of safety legislation following the death of Vincent Cummins, 44, from Arthurstown, Co

Wexford.

The price of Vincent Cummins' life was set at €2,000.

Life on building sites and in other dangerous workplaces is cheap.

Since the introduction of the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act in 1989, more than 600 people have died in accidents in Irish workplaces.

Maximum

However, the maximum fine in the District Court, where most of these cases are heard, is €1,905 or €1,500.

■ June 15, 2000:

A Sligo contractor is fined £100 following the death of a worker hit by a nozzle on the end of a high-pressure jetting hose.

■ July 21, 2000:

A company is fined £2,250 with £1,000 expenses after an employee lost

three fingers and part of his left hand when he became entangled in a machine.

■ September 21, 2000:

A concrete firm is fined £1,500 with £750 expenses as a result of a fatal accident at its plant.

The list goes on and on. Under the legislation, directors, managers and other corporate officers of a company can also be prosecuted if the offence "is proved to have been committed with the consent or connivance" of executives. Only one such prosecution appears to have come to court.

This was against Liam Carroll of Zoe Developments following the death of employee James Master-son on a site at Charlotte Quay in Dublin.

But the case against Zoe and three senior management figures was dropped on a technicality.

Railways

Striking against the cost of privatisation

RAILS WORKERS across Britain are striking against the ravages of privatisation. Rail workers on South West Trains struck three days to win back the kind of pay levels they have lost since rail privatisation.

Some 75 percent of RMT union members voted for strike action in a ballot in which 70 percent took part.

They were also striking against management attempts to weaken union organisation through victimisation of key union activists. South West Trains has taken unprecedented disciplinary action against RMT activists.

Rest days

In Scotland drivers on ScotRail were continuing to refuse to work on rest days. They are fighting for a pay increase which would bring them up to the levels of drivers on other privatised train operating companies.

One platform worker on the picket line at London's Waterloo station told *Socialist Worker*. "Management are saying they have made a generous pay offer.

"But for me and loads of others it means £1 a day after stoppages. Why should we put up with that, especially when the job of every rail worker has become much more

stressful because of the mess privatisation has caused?"

"They reorganised the pay for a range of jobs a few years ago, just after privatisation in 1996," one excess fares collector told *Socialist Worker*.

"They got rid of various overtime and bonus payments, and said they were 'consolidating' them into our basic pay. The whole scam cost me £300 a month."

South West Trains is a profitable company. It makes over £1 million a week. Its parent company, Stagecoach, made nearly £200 million last year.

It wants to squeeze rail workers and passengers, to rake in more. There is an important lesson here for workers under the threat of privatisation.

★ Latest figures show that the Irish government spent just €80m on rail infrastructure in 1999, the same as tiny Luxembourg.

In France the Paris to Marseilles high-speed line journey takes under three hours to cover the 558 miles.

In Ireland, the few "fast" trains between Dublin and Cork also take just under three hours but travel less than a third of the distance, 170 miles.

Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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inside

- ★ Interview with George Monbiot pages 6-7
- ★ Argentina from Revolt to revolution? page 6
- ★ Eamonn McCann on Bloody Sunday page 3

POSTAL WORKER MURDERED

TEACHERS AND PUPILS THREATENED

Time for Protestant and Catholic workers to:

STRIKE AGAINST SECTARIAN BIGOTS

FEAR STALKS the streets of Belfast again. Across the North, people are afraid they're going back to the time when they dreaded the radio news in the morning, in case someone else was dead.

Threats from the Red Hand Defenders and the UFF — both cover names for the UDA — mean that all Catholic workers are seen as 'legitimate targets'. And as one Protestant worker told *Socialist Worker* that means "we're all 'legitimate targets' now — I mean how are they to know who's a Catholic and who's a Protestant?"

Anne, lives in Ardoyne one of the areas most affected by the violence, said, "Most people up this way are fed up, they hear all this talk about 'peace and prosperity' on the news and in the papers, but all they see is

petrol bombs and poverty on the ground."

Mark, a teacher in East Belfast, says of the death threats: "It's ridiculous. Why have they threatened teachers? It's to cause panic."

"We put out a petition with teachers in Belfast, during the Holy Cross protests, calling on teachers to stage a walkout."

"The unions said action would be disruptive to the children, but the latest situation shows that doing nothing has been more disruptive. We need industrial action from all the teachers' unions against the sectarian."

Attacks

John, a bus driver, also spoke of the need for action, "The attacks on bus workers are still continuing. Just the other night a pregnant bus driver had her bus hi-jacked. Most drivers can't live with this, my wife is telling me to get of the buses before I get killed, and I agree with her."

"How must the partner of a Catholic postal worker or a teacher in North Belfast feel?"

"All workers must stand together, act together and give sectarian bigotry the boot", says John. "The unions need to take action against the attacks and threats on all workers and to lead the fight against sectarianism in the north, instead of leaving it to so called community leaders and politicians."

"The politicians are part of the problem. We need a trade union response and ongoing action until all the threats are withdrawn."

STOP PRESS: As *Socialist Worker* went to press postal workers in CWU Northern Ireland No 1 Branch were set to stage a 24 hour unofficial walk out from 6am Tuesday morning reviewing further action later in the day and were demanding official backing. In addition the Northern Ireland Committee of the ICTU had agreed to organise a stoppage for Friday.

■ New turn to page 5

THE UNIONS MUST ORGANISE ACTION!